



Rachel Howarth Fortie Giles

Rachel Howarth Fortie Giles was born April 19, 1850, in Boulton, Lancashire, England. She was the daughter of John Howarth and Ellen Monks Howarth. She married Alexander Fortie on December 31, 1868, in the old Endowment House in Salt Lake City, Utah. He contracted pneumonia and died April 23, 1890. In March, 1893, she married William M. Giles, a widower with a family of ten children, eight of whom lived at home. The youngest was only five years old.

At the age of eighteen, Rachel Howarth came to Utah from Lancashire, England, with her mother's family. She was but four years old when her father died, so that she grew to womanhood without the protecting care of a father.

Like the other members of the family, and at an early age, she had to go out to work to help her mother maintain the home. She was the tenth child in a family of twelve and had one sister and a brother younger than she. She was betrothed to Alexander Fortie in England, and he came to Utah a year before to earn money to send for her. She was a very beautiful and attractive young girl, with dark hair and sparkling black eyes, and always dressed in neat and becoming clothing. Mr. Fortie was employed on the railroad at Echo, Utah, and the Howarth family went to Wanship to reside. Rachel had many boy friends call to see her and was a favorite among the younger class. Upon hearing of this, Alexander left his work, and came to Wanship, and they were married December 31, 1868. Soon after, they moved to Heber City and established a home. Alexander found employment as a carpenter and made a comfortable living from then on.

Many of the substantial buildings in Heber City stand as monuments of his labor, particularly the Wasatch Stake Tabernacle, of which he was the architect. It was erected under his direction and supervision. He contracted pneumonia and died April 23, 1890, leaving Rachel a widow with her three children--two daughters and a son. The two daughters married, leaving Rachel and her son, John A., at home.

In March, 1893, she married William M. Giles. He had eight children living at home at the time. This was a tremendous undertaking for her, but she tackled the job with a determination to make a comfortable home for her husband and his motherless children, which she accomplished very well. She and her husband provided for them until all of them had homes of their own. The flour bin and bread can were never empty. William died 30 April 1926.

Rachel Howarth Fortie Giles died in Heber City, Utah, January 5, 1943.